

Town of Watertown  
Planning and Zoning Commission  
Public Hearing  
Swift School  
October 1, 2008

Time: 7:10PM  
Date: October 1, 2008  
Place: **Watertown High School Technology Center**  
324 French Street  
Watertown, CT

Members Present: D. Minnich, R. Russ, M. Masayda, G. Martin, C. Mancini,  
G. Dupliese, J. Blais, K. Demirs, R. Rondeau, D. George

Others Present: Ruth Mulcahy, Administrator of Land Use

Minnich: I would like to call this public hearing and meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission to order 7:10 on October 1, 2008 at Watertown High School, Technology Center. Carol would you please call the roll.

So everybody is here.

Next item on the agenda is the continuation of public hearing Site Plan/Special Permit #205 modifications of conditions and additional structures located at Swift School. Mike would you please read the notice of public hearing.

Carol: That is a continuation.

Minnich: I am sorry. Thank you. Mr. DiCarlo or whoever is from the school is going to be presenting.

**Joseph DiCarlo – Kaestle Boos**

I am here representing the Board of Education were here as a continuation of our public hearing for a couple of items that needed clarification as far as the site plan approval of modifications. The first item that we wish to address is the guard rail along Colonial Avenue as you know and from the public site tour that we held there is a small section of guard rail fence there and was discussions about what could be done to perhaps the containment of vehicles on the street. After several meetings with both the head of DPW and the Town Engineer we came up with a system by which we will extend the guard rail up toward the woods along the road and then further down toward the entrance extended down and then tapered back into the site. This is the direction from which cars would approach and as the

name implies this swale would then dive cars to the street if they should run off. I have copies of the sketches that were passable and were discussed with the gentlemen representing the town I will leave them out here. As a matter of record the studies the state guidelines for guard rails and unfortunately the missing (inaudible) couldn't be sure exactly why was is there got put in there or how it got required and we went through the manual and studied the regulations and in fact the regulations say that no guard rail is actually required in this location so technically it could be pulled out and have nothing. But since it was there and since there is a chance of some liability we certainly want to protect the school from any other car. We felt this would be the better solution so there is an addition of guard rail in both directions from the pieces there now as I said the tapered end flared off toward the school to contain cars on the highway. I can move onto the second item which was our condenser and the noise thereof. Similarly I would like to pass out some photographs here I give both a picture of what is there now and a picture of the proposed solution. We looked at several options, roofs screening, plants, we looked as several options including thing like roof screening, plant materials and as luck would have it turns out that the most expensive options works the best. The Board of Education has decided to bite the bullet and go with what is referred to as an acoustic blanket. What is going to happen and those are examples of ones in the later pictures the pieces of equipment there are much larger than what we are containing but essentially the fence around the condenser we have will be raised to approximately 8 foot height and then these acoustic blankets will be installed on the fence according to the manufacturer they will reduce the sound by 10 to 12 decibels. At the present time as you recall from the readings of that were taken again at the public's trip the regulations says during the day it cannot exceed 55 and we were at 55. In the evening that level drops down to 45 so if we reduce the blankets are successful reduce it to 45 to 43 decibels then we would be within the requirements of the regulations and the sound would be significantly less. The Board of Education has chosen to go with this option if it is acceptable with this board. That really addresses I believe the issues we have outstanding.

Martin: Is there a plan to change are you going to be taking down the whole 4 foot fence and rebuilding it?

DiCarlo: Yes, actually take the fabric of it and extend the post put higher fabric on it.

Martin: What you have right now the door is right in front of it facing where the homes are, if that door got moved to the side it doesn't appear at least by this picture that you clip the panels on a movable door.

DiCarlo: If they could be installed on the gate and the gate actually faces towards the hillside where the stairs are, the houses are off to your left in that picture.

Martin: I was just thinking the noise factor.

DiCarlo: For example the picture does not show a blanket on the gate but they can be installed on the gate.

Martin: This looks like it just abuts on the other except for where the gate is I would think you get a better seal if you added it to the side.

DiCarlo: Which again the gate here faces toward the hillside where the stairs are.

Minnich: On the guard rail if you could help in relation to where it is now and to the east of that is the guard rail extended from where it currently is to the east.

DiCarlo: Correct, approximately and don't mark my words approximately 3 more lengths down and then one angled back towards the school. From where it is now going in the opposite direction west going up the hill there will be two more sections added there.

Masayda: My comment says if the guard rail is outside the clear zone my suggestion would be to remove it is not necessary it is adequate recovery for a vehicle. Eliminate the unsightliness of the guard rail and again a guard rail in itself is considered a hazard and it is not necessary if it is outside the clear zone.

Martin: Mike have you been there to the site?

Masayda: Yes I have.

Martin: Let me tell you if you are going to have the opinion that there is no guard rail necessary there I am really surprised.

Dupliese: I hate to disagree with you Mike. But the thing is that I ride my bike up and down that hill with my kids, my son took a right going down that and he went inside the guard rail and then went down and then he took a header. So if there was no guard rail there the kids would be going up and down that hill all day long and then when they come down when they go down that hill I know I am not talking about cars here, I am talking about kids on their bikes. If you head down that hill your going right at the building and the only thing that stops you is the building.

Masayda: Justification for guide railing is again there is adequate recovery for the designed speed that is out there and there is really no need for it. You could be applying guide rail everywhere and it's not necessary according to the....

Dupliese: I am just saying it is there already and if their willing to extend two lengths of it I would prefer to have it there..

- Martin: If that is adequately recovery space there, I don't know what that space is let me tell you it is a very short space between the road and the space you have and then the drop off that has that walkway. To me it's a bad move not putting it in there.
- Masayda: He indicated that he had the option, the criteria for removing if he wanted to but he chose to leave it there so just giving my opinion.
- Mancini: I think we told him that we wanted to extend it and put it off on an angle not to remove it.
- Masayda: He said in his presentation beyond the clear zone where you could remove it.
- Minnich: The guard rail that you are composing is similar to the guard rail or identical to the guard rail you have there now?
- DiCarlo: Correct
- Minnich: Last question I had was to follow up on last time and by your not mentioning it you probably made a decision on this one I just wanted to hear it for the record regarding the generator there was discussion but leaving up to you folks to decide how you wanted to deal with that, was that the comment of the Commission to suggest that you take a look at limiting the hours to which that generator would be used for non emergency uses so that it would once again not be during basically the evening hours and early morning hours for people in the neighborhood.
- DiCarlo: In fact the program has been changed so that the generator will cycle or test at 2:30 pm on Wednesdays now. That is when school is getting out.
- Minnich: So by that then you are going to deal with it yourselves.
- DiCarlo: It is done already.
- Dupliese: I had only one question on the compressor are you surrounding it on all four sides with the reduction blanket?
- DiCarlo: Three sides.
- Dupliese: Will that reduce the efficiency of the unit because you have the six foot blanket all the way around?
- DiCarlo: No, in fact you may have mentioned something about chimneys on the fans and they actually have blankets that will wrap the unit. This is an air cooled unit so we need at least 3 feet clear which we have to the fences so it will not reduce the efficiency.

Minnich: Any other comment or questions from the Commission?

Rondeau: The screening that you are talking about you is putting any screening around the generator just around the compressor unit?

DiCarlo: Yes, so you will understand what you see when you look at that generator, the generator is actually inside there is a room and the room has insulation, the panels you see have insulation built on the inside of them already sound insulation.

Rondeau: On the photograph that you sent around to everyone there is a on the left hand side there is a fence that appears to be 3 or 4 feet that is on top of the wall there who owns that?

DiCarlo: That is on school property, there is another 4 feet I don't know if shows on that picture you might be able to detect a little wood fence behind that that is actually the property line and since this picture was taken the Board of Education has had a row of evergreen trees planted in that space between the property line and the fence you see in the picture.

Minnich: Any other comments or questions from members of the Commission? Any comments from members of the public let me read what I am required to read by our by-laws and it applies to all the public hearings tonight the Planning and Zoning Commission establishes rules for the time of public hearings copy of these rules at the doorway of this room. You are reminded it is prohibited by law to communicate to Commission members on the merits of applications while decisions are pending and when communications are not Commission meetings. Please communication with staff when the Planning and Zoning Commission is not in session. Documents pertaining to applications must be recorded and received in the office of the Commission's in sufficient time for staff to review documents and prepare copies.

Are there any comments or questions from members of the public?

Are there any further comments from Commission members or the applicants?

Is there a motion close this public hearing? Is there a second? Is there any further discussion? All those in favor please say I, all those opposed no motion carries.

Text of Motion to Close public hearing  
Motion made by C. Mancini and seconded by R. Russ  
All in favor and none opposed.

Michael Masayda \_\_\_\_\_  
Seretary

